

Boundary Dam Relicensing – Fish Management Suppression Measures: Public Meeting Minutes

June 2, 2016 6:00-7:30 PM

Cutter Theatre - Metaline Falls, WA

General outline of the meeting:

- Introduction of organizing agencies (15 minutes)
- Presentation about electro-fishing project context and details (30 minutes)
- Question and answer session (45 minutes)

Introductions:

This public meeting was sponsored by Seattle City Light (SCL). Presenting information and answering questions were natural resource staff from Kalispel Department of Natural Resources (KNRD) and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). The meeting was facilitated by Washington State University Extension (WSU) faculty.

Presentation Overview:

Non-native fish removal is required under the terms of SCL's relicensing for the Boundary Dam. SCL and the other agencies here are committed to provide continuing information and outreach. This meeting focuses on electro-fishing projects occurring this summer (2016).

- Native fish species (especially Westslope Cutthroat Trout) are declining due to pressure from non-native fish (brook trout, and others).
- In order to protect and restore native species, non-native fish must be removed.
- SCL, KNRD, and WDFW are working together to plan non-native fish removal projects including mechanical methods (electro-fishing) and piscicide removal (applying rotenone).
- Mechanical removal of brook trout through electrofishing will be initiated in July, August and September in the headwaters of Sullivan Creek. No rotenone projects will be implemented in 2016.
- Removal of non-native fish will immediately provide additional habitat and resources for native species of fish, aiding in population growth and distribution.
- Further electro-fishing projects will be conducted in the coming years.

Question and Answers:

- Will there be local benefits for these projects?
 - Summer jobs will be advertised locally and qualified persons are encouraged to apply.
 - Crews will stay overnight locally during project activities, which will boost economic impact.
- How do we know this electro-fishing project will be effective?
 - Monitoring will be in place to gauge the success of these efforts over time.
 - We won't have data by the next meeting on this specific project, but we will over the life of the project.
 - The agencies have data showing success in past projects.
- We are concerned about future eradication projects using rotenone. Is it dangerous?
 - No, rotenone is a naturally occurring substance used safely and successfully throughout the US since 1948 and is an accepted best practice for managing unwanted fish in lakes and streams.
 - Recent projects in the Pend Oreille Basin conducted by KNRD and WDFW have shown that these projects can be carried out safely and that they are effective at restoring native fish.
 - The agencies will provide detailed information about rotenone and proposed rotenone eradication treatments in depth in the next meeting (Spring, 2017) and will provide plenty of advance notice to citizens and landowners.

For additional information on electro-fishing conservation projects in Sullivan Creek, please contact Jessica Walston:
JWalston@kalispeltribe.com

For information on fish eradication projects using piscicide, please contact Bill Baker: Bill.Baker@dfw.wa.gov